

REMARKS

Claims 18-22 are pending. Claims 2-4 and 8-10 have been cancelled.

Takeda (6,561,921) explains that prior art irons are numbered in ascending order from longest to shortest, for example, Nos. 1, 2, 3 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, PW (pitching wedge), SW (sand wedge), GW (gap wedge), and LW (loft wedge). Typically irons 1 - 4 are classified as "Long Irons" and have generally lofts between 15 - 25 degrees and lengths between 40.5" - 38". Irons 5 - 8 are known as "Mid-Irons" and generally have lofts between 25 - 40 degrees and lengths between 38.5" - 36". Irons 9 - LW are known as "Short-Irons" and have lofts 40 - 64 degrees and lengths between 36" - 34.5".

Typical head weights for "Long Irons" range between 230 - 255 grams. Head weights of "Mid-Irons" range between 255 - 280 grams. Head weights of "Short Irons" range between 280 - 305 grams.

The progression of prior art irons are such that as club numbers increase, the length decreases, the loft angle increases and the head weight increases. This progression creates clubs that as their numbers increase, their respective shot distances decrease. It is also true that the distance decreases, the accuracy of irons tend to increase. The accuracy improvements are related to the decreased club length which makes the club easier to control.

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The Applicant's invention is an iron that can be added to any set of irons. It does not follow the conventional progressions of prior art irons. The Applicant's invention would fit into the category of "Short Irons" because its length is preferably between 37" and 35". However, its loft would classify it into the "Long-Iron" range with a preferable loft angle between 23 and 25 degrees. The head weight of the Applicant's invention does not fall into any existing iron category because it is preferably designed to be 320 - 340 grams, which is much heavier than any prior art iron with said preferable club length and preferable loft angle.

Moreover, the Applicant's invention has a preferable sole width in the center region of the sole between 1.2 and 1.5 inches and a preferable face height of 1.7 to 1.9 inches. These dimensions are significantly larger than prior art irons of said preferable club length, loft angle and head weight.

The combination of a shorter club length, stronger loft angle, heavier head weight, wider sole width and taller club face involves many combinations of non-intuitive and contrary progressions of iron club head specifications that makes the Applicant's invention a unique and novel embodiment of an iron that can supplement any set of irons for special playing situations a golfer may encounter on the course.

See the following Table to show distinguishing specifications of existing prior art.

Irons with Loft = 30 deg. or less	Height = 1.75" or more	Sole width = 1.2" or more	Head weight = 320g or more	Club Length = 37" or less
Applicant's invention	YES	YES	YES	YES
Young	NO	NO	NO	NO
Sherwood	YES	NO	NO	NO
Takeda	NO	NO	NO	NO
Sato	NO	YES	NO	NO

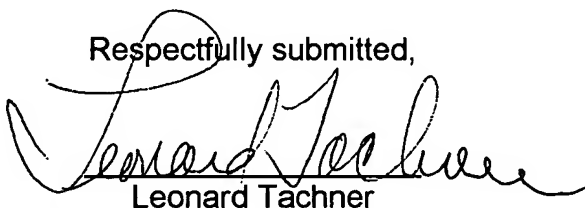
The above table shows that the Applicant's invention may share a single characteristic with an existing club, but it does not share all and some are completely unique.

For shots around the green when squaring the club face to a desired target line is important for greater accuracy, the Applicant's invention has a sightline alignment groove in the sole flange that is perpendicular to the face loft rotation axis. The sightline alignment groove is also very low on the club head to keep it from moving too far off the direct line of sight even if the club is tipped toe-up or toe-down. The preferred height of the sightline alignment groove from the lowest point on the bottom of the club (sole) is less than .5". These characteristics make the sightline alignment groove unique from prior art in that it is low on the club head, it is perpendicular to the face loft rotation axis of the face and it resides on the sole flange of the head. By putting the sightline on the flange, it makes it a longer than prior art sightlines that exist on the top surface of the

face or on the back surface of the club head to further increase the exact direction for take-away and follow through when making the shot. By placing the sightline alignment groove low on the club head, it does not move off the target line as prior art sightlines due to a shorter rotation arm from the point of contact of the sole and ground to the sightline. Having the sightline alignment groove perpendicular to the face loft rotation axis distinguishes in an additional third method from Duclos (U.S. Patent No 4,128,244) whose indicia lines are not perpendicular to the face loft rotation axis.

Based upon the foregoing, it is believed that pending claims 18-22 recite patentable subject matter that is neither anticipated by nor obvious over the art of record. Accordingly, an allowance is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



Leonard Tachner

Attorney for the Applicant(s)

Registration No. 26,344

Dated: *LT*

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LT/jf

Telephone (949) 752-8525

Telefax (949) 955-2415

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